Organizational Transparency

Nathan Hewitt

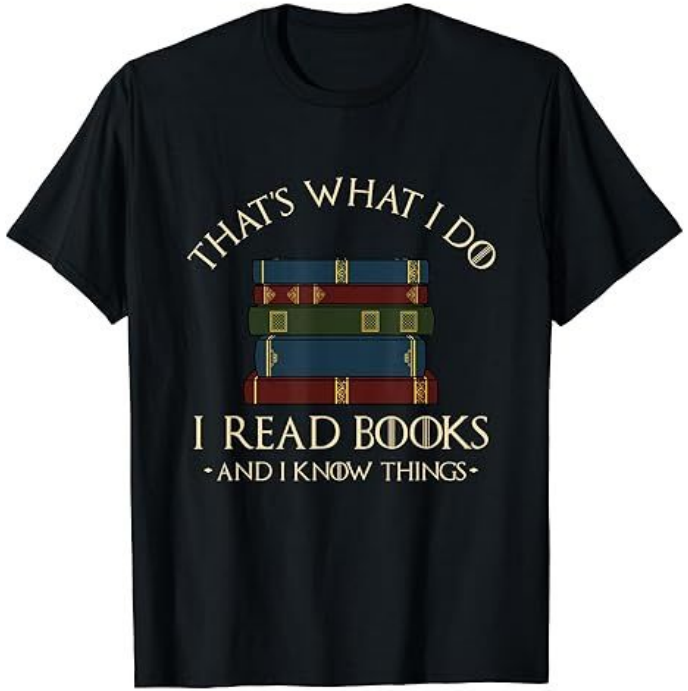
Boon

or Boondoggle

BOY SCOUT HANDBOOK
A HANDBOOK OF TRAINING FO
THROUGH SCOUTI
SIXTH EDITION · SECOND PRINTING AUG
TOTAL PRINTING SINCE 191
BOY SCOUTS OF A

boondoggle
“a waste of both time and money that continues nonetheless”

We the People
IT DOESN'T NEED TO BE
REWRITTEN
We the People
IT NEEDS TO BE
REREAD


THAT'S WHAT I DO
I READ BOOKS
AND I KNOW THINGS

boon
“a blessing”

Budget
Transparent and open finances.

or a curse?

transactions that are conducted by an entity. The Open Collective does not require public disclosure of the identities of the transactioning parties, and individuals submitting transactions may remain anonymous through usernames. However, while the username can be anonymous, the account must be tied to a corporation that conducts financial transactions such as PayPal or Venmo. By tying itself to a company that conduct financial transactions, identities of some of the individuals occupying the forest and supporting the occupation were discovered.

transparency
→ knowledge
→ power

It is tempting to avoid power by avoiding hierarchy, and by avoiding structure altogether.

Why not hierarchy?

- Experiences of gaslighting, gatekeeping, discrimination, and lots of other bad-boss behavior
- …accompanied by an analysis:
  - Racism, sexism, ableism, classism, heteronormativity, and other forms of oppression are *everywhere*
  - Ingrained in an environment of unfettered global capitalism
  - And growing out of histories of settler-colonialism, genocide, imperial theft, and (in the US) chattel slavery
  - Where the **power** is always concentrated with a select few

Soft power

The less structure, the more **new hierarchies based on attributes such as personality type, skill set, and communication style will emerge** (see Susan Baker, 2015)

THE TYRANNY of STRUCTURELESSNESS

by Jo Freeman aka Joreen

The earliest version of this article was given as a talk at a conference called by the Southern Female Rights Union, held in Beulah, Mississippi in May 1970. It was written up for Notes from the Third Year (1971), but the editors did not use it. It was then submitted to several movement publications, but only one asked permission to publish it; others did so without permission. The first official place of publication was in Vol. 2, No. 1 of The Second Wave (1972). This early version in movement publications was authored by Joreen. Different versions were published in the Berkeley Journal of Sociology, Vol. 17, 1972-73, pp. 151-165, and Ms. magazine, July 1973, pp. 76-78, 86-89, authored by Jo Freeman. This piece spread all over the world. Numerous people have edited, reprinted, cut, and translated "Tyranny" for magazines, books and web sites, usually without the permission or knowledge of the author. The version below is a blend of the three cited here.

To Top

During the years in which the women's liberation movement has been taking shape, a great emphasis has been placed on what are called leaderless, structureless groups as the main -- if not sole -- organizational form of the movement. The source of this idea was a natural reaction against the over-structured society in which most of us found ourselves, and the inevitable control this gave others over our lives, and the continual elitism of the Left and similar groups among those who were supposedly fighting this overstructuredness.

The idea of "structurelessness," however, has moved from a healthy

Principles of democratic structuring

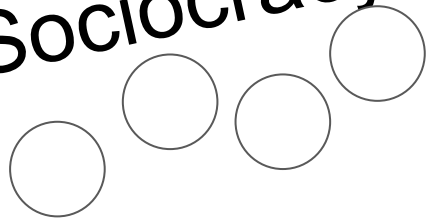
1. Delegation
2. Accountability
3. Distribution of authority
4. Rotation of tasks
5. Rational allocation of tasks
6. **Diffusion of information**
7. Equal access to resources

“Information is power. Access to information enhances one's power.

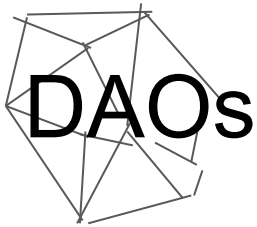
“The more one knows about how things work and what is happening, the more politically effective one can be.”

Jo Freeman on the “diffusion of information to everyone as frequently as possible.”

Sociocracy



DAOs



Consensus

Teal orgs

FLAT
hierarchy

Self-directed

transparency =
visible +
accessible +
contextualized +
comprehensible

When done right…

Transparency can help:

- Cultivate trust
- Encourage others to help
- Hold power to account

But transparency can also be turned against you…

- Transparency can diminish your power - you can be held to account
- They don’t have to take your word for it
- Mistakes cannot be so easily obscured, and can diminish trust and ’cause problems
- Information can be weaponized to attack your team or community

So is transpare a boondoggle?

Transparency and DWeb's principles

1. **Technology for Human Agency:** it is one - both yours and your opponents
2. **Distributed Benefits:** it makes hoarding power a lot harder by distributing power (in the form of knowledge)
3. **Mutual Respect:** it encourages accountability, and can support equity, mutual trust, and respect
4. **Humanity:** like almost any technology, the system itself is apolitical, and can be used or abused by anyone for almost any aim
5. **Ecological Awareness:** transparency transfers knowledge, and better understanding our world can help us to live in balance with it